

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 7216

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (PRESIDENT CARTER)
SUBJ: THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT: SOME THOUGHTS FROM GIEREK

1. SUMMARY. ON OCTOBER 3, PROFESSOR JAN SZCZEPANSKI OF THE POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES GAVE THE DCM THE SUBSTANCE OF A DISCUSSION HE HAD HAD THE DAY BEFORE WITH FIRST SECRETARY GIEREK CONCERNING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. GIEREK CLEARLY SEES POLAND'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL US GRAIN ON FAVORABLE CREDIT TERMS AS NUMBER ONE ON THE AGENDA. HE ALSO HOPES NOTHING WILL BE SAID PUBLICLY BEFORE OR DURING THE VISIT TO EMBARRASS HIM WITH THE USSR, AND HE PLANS OVER THE COMING WEEK TO MAKE A CONCILIATORY GESTURE OR TWO TO THE CHRUCH. END SUMMARY.

2. PROFESSOR SZCZEPANSKI SAID HE HAD A LONG TALK WITH GIEREK DURING AN OCTOBER 21 PLANE FLIGHT TO AND FROM POZNAN, WHERE THEY ATTENDED THE OPENING CEREMONIES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR AT ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY. HE SAID GIEREK SPOKE QUITE OPENLY ABOUT HOW HE HOPES THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT WILL GO, FULLY KNOWING, ACCORDING TO SZCZEPANSKI, THAT HIS THOUGHTS WOULD PROBABLY REACH USG OFFICIALS. FIRST OF ALL, GIEREK SAID HE WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS COMING. HE SEES THE VIST AS PROVIDING A NEW IMPETUS TO US-POLISH RELATIONS, WHICH THE FIRST SECRETARY IS ANXIOUS TO CARRY FORWARD DESPITE HIS PREOCCUPATIONS
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WITH CURRENT INTERNAL STRAINS IN POLAND. HE SAID POLAND'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL AGRICULTURAL PURCHASES WILL BE THE MAIN TOPIC ON HIS AGENDA, AND HE HOPES THE PRESIDENT WILL BE ABLE TO RESPONS AFFIRMATIVELY TO THE GOP'S RECENT REQUESTS.

3. SZCZEPANSKI SAID GIERK HOPED THAT NOTHING WOULD BE

SAID BEFORE OR DURING THE VISIT WHICH WOULD EMBARRASS POLAND IN ITS REALTIONS WITH ITS "NEIGHBOR TO THE EAST". GIEREK SAID RELATIONS BETWEEN WARSAW AND MOSCOE ARE "NOT EASY" AT PRESENT, AND HE WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE ANY ADDITIONAL STRAIN CAUSED BY THE VISIT. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE HOPED THAT THE US SIDE WOULD PROJECT A READINESS TO SEE POLAND "AS IT IS" AND WOULD AVOID EVEN IMPLICIT CRITICISM. SZCZEPANSKI SAID PARTY SECRETARY EDWARD BABIUCH, WHO WAS ALSO ON THE PLANE, SAID HE HOPED THE PRESIDENT COULD SAY A FEW PUBLIC WORDS OF PERSONAL PRAISE FOR THE FIRST SECRETARY.

4. GIEREK ALSO SAID HE HOPED NO PUBLIC REFERENCES WOULD BE MADE TO THE COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE WORKERS (KOR) AND OTHER DISSIDENT GROUPS. ACCORDING TO SZCZEPANSKI, JACEK KURON AND OTHER KOR MEMBERS ARE SPREADING THE WORD THAT THE PRESIDENT IS COMING TO POLAND AS A RESULT OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. GIEREK WOULD CLEARLY NOT WISH TO HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT LEND ANY FURTHER PRESTIGE OR DIGNITY TO KOR. SZCZEPANSKI SAID A SERIOUS DEBATE IS NOW GOING ON IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE CONCERNING POSSIBLE "LEGALIZATION" OF THE LEAGUE FOR THE DFENSE OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND THE CITIZEN. IF, AS THE LIBERALS WISH, THIS OCCURS, THE COMMITTEE WOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS A VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION AND WOULD BE PERMITTED TO FUNCTION OPENLY. (COMMENT: THE LEAGUE IS CONSIDERABLY TO THE RIGHT OF KOR AND MUCH WEAKER IN TIS PUBLIC APPEAL. IF THE REGIME

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"LEGALIZES" IT, IT WILL BE IN THE HOPE THAT IT WILL HELP SPLIT OPPOSITIONIST OPINION. END COMMENT)

5. SZCZEPANSKI SAID GIERK PLANS TO TRY TO IMPROVE HIS RELATIONS WITH CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI OVER THE COMING WEEKS. THE FIRST SECRETARY VIEWS THE CHURCH AS THE ONLY POLITICAL FORCE OF CONSEQUENCE IN POLAND BESIDES THE PARTY. HE CHARACTERIZED WYSZYNSKI AS A TRUE POLISH PATRIOT, INTERESTED IN PROMOTING POLAND'S NATIONAL INTEREST. THE FIRST SECRETARY ALLEGEDLY BELIEVES THAT AN AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE THE CHURCH WITH ACCESS TO RADIO AND TV WOULD BE FATAL FOR HIM, BUT CONSIDERS THERE ARE OTHER GESTURES HE CAN MAKE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND STATE. HE WILL AGREE, FOR EXAMPLE, TO PERMIT MORE FREEDON TO, AND GREATER CIRCULATION OF, CHURCH NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS. THIS AND OTHER PARTY-CHURCH MATTERS WILL BE DISCUSSED AT A MEETING BETWEEN GIEREK AND THE PRIMATE LATER THIS MONTH, ACCORDING TO SZCZEPANSKI. GIEREK HOPES THAT THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO HAVE CONTACT WITH THE PRIMATE DURING THE VISIT. HE TOLD SZCZEPANSKI THAT HE CONSIDERS THE PRESIDENT WILL BE IN POLAND AS HIS GUEST, AND NOT THE GOP'S , AND A MEETING BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIMATE

WOULD BE "EMBARRASSING" FOR HIM. IF SOMEONE ELSE ON THE PRESIDENT'S STAFF, SUCH AS DR. BRZEZINSKI, WISHES TO SEE THE PRIMATE, GIEREK WOULD NOT OBJECT. (COMMENT: I MOST STRONGLY RECOMMEND WE ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING. FIRST, OF COURSE, WE MUST FIND OUT IF THE PRIMATE WOULD RECEIVE SOMEONE OF LESSER RANK. I AM PRETTY SURE HE WOULD. IF SUCH A MEETING IS ARRANGED, I URGE THAT THERE BE NO PRE-ANNOUNCEMENT OF IT, LEST THAT MEETING THEN OVERSHADOW THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH GIEREK IN TERMS OF THE AMOUNT OF PRESS INTEREST IT EVOKES. END COMMENT.)

6. COMMENT: SZCZEPANSKI IS NOT A PARTY MEMBER, BUT IS, RATHER, THE MOST DISTINGUISHED NON-PARTY SCHOLAR WHO HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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SO CLOSE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GIEREK. BECAUSE HE HAS, IN THE PAST, NOT HESITATED TO TELL THE EMPEROR THAT HIS CLOTHING WAS NOT FULLY ADJUSTED, THIS RELATIONSHIP HAS HAD ITS UPS AND DOWNS. RIGHT NOW, IT IS ON THE UP-GRADE.

7. THIS IS A TWO-WAY STREET. IF WE HAVE CONCERNS WE WISH TO CONVEY IN AN INFORMAL FASHION TO GIEREK BEFORE THE VISIT, WE CAN SEE IF SZCZEPANSKI WILL CARRY THE MAIL. AS WE GET CLOSER TO THE VISIT, WE WILL WANT TO TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK AT THE DOMESTIC SITUATION HERE AND DETERMINE HOW ESSENTIAL WE CONSIDER IT TO BE FOR SZCZEPANSKI TO SUGGEST A GESTURE OR TWO WHICH GIEREK MIGHT MAKE.

8. THE FACT THAT GIEREK HAS VOLUNTEERED HIS READINESS TO CONTEMPLATE A MEETING BY A RANKING AMERICAN OFFICIAL WITH THE PRIMATE IS A CLEAR ACKNOWLEDGE OF THE CHURCH'S STRENGTH -- AND THE REGIME'S CURRENT FEELING OF RELATIVE WEAKNESS. SOME FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN SENATOR EDWAR KENNEDY WANTED TO VISIT POLAND, BUT INSISTED HE MUST CALL ON THE PRIMATE, THE LEADER SHIP WAS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED AND THE VISIT ABORTED OVER THE ISSUE. END COMMENT.

DAVIES

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